Unit .19

Session .01

Jesus is the Last Adam

Scripture

Luke 3:23,38; Romans 5:12-21

23 As he began his ministry, Jesus was about thirty years old and was thought to be the son of Joseph, son of Heli, … **38** son of Enos, son of Seth, son of Adam, son of God. … **12** Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all people, because all sinned. **13** In fact, sin was in the world before the law, but sin is not charged to a person's account when there is no law. **14** Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam's transgression. He is a type of the Coming One. **15** But the gift is not like the trespass. For if by the one man's trespass the many died, how much more have the grace of God and the gift which comes through the grace of the one man Jesus Christ overflowed to the many. **16** And the gift is not like the one man's sin, because from one sin came the judgment, resulting in condemnation, but from many trespasses came the gift, resulting in justification. **17** Since by the one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive the overflow of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. **18** So then, as through one trespass there is condemnation for everyone, so also through one righteous act there is justification leading to life for everyone. **19** For just as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so also through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. **20** The law came along to multiply the trespass. But where sin multiplied, grace multiplied even more **21** so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace will reign through righteousness, resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Intro Options

Main Point:
The Son of God came to bring those spiritually dead to life.

Remember, this icon means there is a Leader Pack item that goes with the lesson. See Leader Pack for additional instructions.

Option 1

Ask your students to get into small groups to prepare skits. The title of their first skit should be, "Date Night: Everything Gone Wrong." They should prepare a skit showing a boy and girl on a date. One of them (either the boy or the girl) should do everything wrong: arrive late, be dressed wrong, go to the wrong place, say the wrong things, whatever they can think of.

The title of the second skit should be: "Date Night: Everything Made Right." This skit should feature the return of the person who had the terrible experience in the first skit (not the one who did everything wrong). This person is, understandably, hesitant to try dating again. However, a new person plays the date; this time, he or she gets right everything that Date #1 got wrong. Have them prepare and show the skits.

Debrief by asking how the second guy or girl made everything right. How would the person who endured both dates change his or her mind about dating? Explain that today's lesson will show how Adam is like the first date and Jesus is like the second date: everything Adam got wrong (and we would have gotten wrong, too), Jesus more than made right.

Option 2

Your students should pretend they are the creative team for a multimedia production company. This company makes everything from movies to TV shows to novels to video games to stage plays comic books to radio shows. The corporation has a rough outline for a story, and they want your students to come up with ideas for turning the story into a production.

The story: a land, or city, or village, falls under a curse due to the foolish actions of someone in that place. The land lies under that terrible curse until a hero or heroine comes to undo the actions of the initial foolish person. The story can be set in a fantasy realm (a foolish action draws the curse from an angry mage) or in modern day (some foolish choices in a laboratory result in a mutation or plague affecting a city) or anything else the students can think of.

Alone or in groups, they should prepare a short pitch for the corporation. For example, a solo person might make a short comic strip, or a poster for a movie, or a short script idea. A group might assemble a movie trailer or radio play skit.

Let them share their pitches. Talk about which ones sound particularly exciting. Connect the stories to today's lesson: Adam was the fool who brought the curse (like any of us would have), but Jesus is the last Adam who undoes that curse.

TEACHING PLAN

Often, Christians treat sin as if it's a disease they can easily pick up, like the common cold or flu. We think that if we can just stay away from the dirty people and places, keep our hands as clean as possible, and do all the good "churchy" things, we'll be protected. At the root of this behavior is the belief that one day we can "make it" as Christians, and when we finally become mature enough, we will conquer all of our temptations and our tendencies toward sin will finally disappear.

- **Why do you think we have a tendency to think this way about sin?**

The reality of our sin problem is much more serious than a seasonal cold. It is not something we simply catch; it is part of our spiritual DNA from the moment of our conception. Through the fall of our forefather Adam, we've each inherited a human nature broken and bent toward sin, the penalty of which is death and separation from God.

Read Luke 3:23,38; Romans 5:12-15.

In Genesis 1:26 we get a peek into a divine discussion. God, who is three persons, said, "Let us make man in our image." And He did. Then God declared that it was good. The Bible doesn't record exactly how long it was this way, but for a period of time all was indeed good, pure, and whole. Until sin entered the scene, Adam and Eve impeccably reflected God's character and enjoyed God's presence, as they were created to do.

But then paradise was shattered with the fall of Adam. The perfect fellowship he and Eve enjoyed with their Creator was lost. Sin opened their eyes, hardened their hearts, and affected all of mankind to come. Everything within these two special creatures had been damaged, and with them all of creation had become tainted with sin.

- **If you were in Adam's shoes, do you think you would have chosen differently? Why or why not?**

Each person, because of our shared sinful nature, now experiences both spiritual and physical death. We no longer reflect the perfect image of God as we were intended to. Add to that, sin cannot and will not go unpunished by God, and the punishment for sin is death. Paul makes it clear that all have sinned and now every soul deserves punishment. We have all been condemned by our sin.

- **Share a time you experienced or witnessed injustice. How did that lack of justice make you feel?**
- **Why would it be wrong of God not to respond appropriately to sin (injustice)?**

COMMENTARY

Main Point:
The Son of God came to bring those spiritually dead to life.

Luke 3

3:23,28. "The genealogy presented in Luke appealed to a broader audience than the one in Matthew. Luke emphasizes Christ's humanity and His universal appeal. Luke does not begin Jesus' genealogy with Abraham (as does Matthew); he traces Jesus' lineage with an emphasis on His humanity, showing that Jesus was the son of Adam as well as the divine Son of God (v. 38)."[1]

Romans 5

12. Spiritual death is both connected with physical death and distinguished from it. It is the separation of the entire person from God. God, as a perfectly holy being, cannot look upon sin or tolerate its presence. Thus, sin is a barrier to the relationship between God and humans, bringing them under God's judgment and condemnation. The essence of spiritual death can be seen in the case of Adam and Eve. "For when you eat of it [the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil] you will certainly die" (Gen 2:17) did not mean that they would experience immediate physical death. It did mean … that their potential mortality would become actual. It also meant spiritual death, separation between them and God.[2]

15. Paul's whole argument in this section of Romans is based on headship: Adam, as the head of the human race, sinned and God saw in Adam the whole human race as guilty. Conversely, the second Adam, Jesus Christ is the head of a new spiritual race. Christ did not sin, and God saw in Christ's innocence all who unite themselves to him by faith as likewise innocent. Our being declared guilty in Adam is no more on the basis of our "sins" than being declared innocent in Christ is on the basis of our "not sins." In both cases, headship is the cause. Those who think it unjust of God to lump them into Adam's sin might consider whether they should think it just for God to lump them into Christ's righteousness.[3]

99 Essential Doctrines (p. 08, DDG)

Imputation

When God pardoned sinners at the cross, our sins were imputed or transferred to Christ, who became sin on our behalf. Our sin was imputed to Christ, and Christ's righteousness was imputed to us (Rom. 5:17; 1 Cor. 1:30). When God the Father looks at those who have trusted in Christ, He does not see their sins but the righteousness of Christ as belonging to them (Rom. 4:6).

TEACHING PLAN

Read Romans 5:16-17.

Christ came to overcome the destruction of Adam, both in terms of our guilt and our corruption. The condemnation for our guilt must be corrected through what Paul in verse 16 calls justification, our being declared to be in a right legal standing with God. But not only are we declared justified, our sin-ridden selves are progressively renewed and changed through a process known as sanctification, solving the spiritual corruption that sin brought with it. To make things clearer, justification is a permanent, once-for-all declaration of righteousness (right standing with God through Jesus); sanctification is an ongoing work where we are transformed and made more and more like Jesus.

- **Why can't one have sanctification without justification? Why are both important when thinking about our salvation in Christ?**

With the advances in the DNA technology of forensics science, exoneration has been granted to individuals who have been falsely accused, condemned, and imprisoned. Many, after losing decades of freedom, were released and officially declared "not guilty." From condemnation and chains to innocence and freedom, these men and women are given a new lease on life.

The declarations of a legal system hold great power and influence over the lives of its defendants—as do the declarations God makes over us. However, there is a huge difference between those situations of false imprisonment and our own legal status before God. Every one of us deserves the penalty of death. We were rightly declared "guilty" and spiritually imprisoned by our sin. Yet through the gift of Christ's righteousness, this ruling has been overturned. We have now been declared "not guilty" because Christ Himself has paid our penalty.

Read Romans 5:18-21.

- **How would you feel if you were forced to take on someone else's guilt?**

Justification is an important concept to solidify in our minds. It is a huge part of the grace we've received through Jesus' work on the cross. Christ hung on the cross, having been falsely accused and condemned to execution. Yet exoneration didn't come. Jesus carried out the suffering and death caused by sin "[God] made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:21). Christ took on our sins then gave us His righteousness—all so God could make the declaration "not guilty" over us.

As pointed out, not only are we declared righteous but we have also been given everything we need to live out this righteousness (2 Pet. 1:3). This is what we referred to as the doctrine of sanctification. God has given us a brand new holy wardrobe, and it is one we could never afford on our own. We've been called to live out the holiness of God through displaying the righteousness of Christ. Our inward identities are to become outward realities as we begin to display the glory of the One who saved us.

- **Do you truly believe that you have been made righteous before God, through Christ? Or are you still trying to prove yourself good enough for God?**

COMMENTARY

Main Point:
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Romans 5

16-17. "In acting as the representative of all humanity, Adam was in a sense a model (or prototype) of Christ. But the actions of the two men were very different (5:15): Adam's act was characterized by disobedience; Christ's act, by self-sacrifice in obedience to the will of God. One man was selfish; the other gave a gift. The results of their actions are also different (5:16). Adam's sin brought condemnation, death and separation from God; the gift of Christ brought justification despite our many sins. Ultimately, Adams' actions led to the reign of death, but Jesus' actions meant that those who receive God's grace will reign in life (5:17)."[4]

Activity

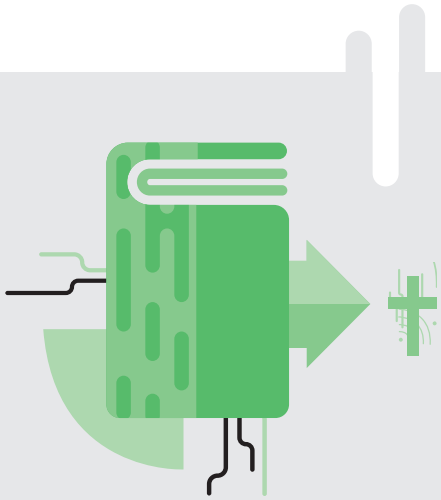
As a group, come up with a list of difficult situations in which students or their families might find themselves. They could directly involve sin or not. Examples might include loneliness, financial hardships, habitual lying, physical injury or disease, etc. If possible, write your group's list on the board.

Students should now form pairs or work solo. Give them drawing materials. They should choose one difficulty from the list and make two pictures. In the first picture, they should show how that difficulty is ultimately a result of Adam's transgression (e.g., a student's academic struggles might be due to sloth, or due to natural inability from the sin-curse, or the sinful bias of the teacher). In the second picture, they should show how Jesus, the last Adam, helps them overcome that difficulty (Jesus' grace enables them to be content with a C, provided it's the student's best effort, or Jesus' grace overcomes the sloth as the student makes his or her schoolwork an act of worship).

Instead of students' making drawings, they could also compose poems or lyrics: at least one verse would explain how the difficulty stems from Adam's transgression, and at least one more verse explains how Jesus overcomes that difficulty. Your students could even have a rap battle or two if they have the ability and maturity to do so graciously.

(p. 10, DDG) Christ Connection

The first Adam's transgression brought sin, death, and condemnation upon the world. Jesus is the last Adam, the long-promised offspring who overcame Adam's transgression through His life of perfect obedience and His payment for sin on the cross. Through Jesus we have life and are declared righteous before God.



JESUS IS THE LAST ADAM

Luke 3:23, 38; Romans 12:5–21

JESUS IS THE LAST ADAM

The Son of God came to bring those spiritually dead to life.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus, the last Adam, overcame Adam's sin through a life of perfect obedience and His payment for sin on the cross. Through Jesus, we are declared right with God.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

MERCY – Choosing not to punish someone who deserves to be punished.

HEAD

What things were passed down to us through Adam? What things are given to us through Jesus?

Why does God have to punish sin? How did God give us mercy instead of punishment?

HEART

The Bible tells us that every person is a sinner (Romans 3:23), but Romans 5 says that when we believe in Christ through faith, we are justified. It means God declares us not guilty, once and for all—He no longer holds our sins against us. Does this truth change your ideas about how God responds to you? How could knowing this truth help when you do sin?

When someone hurts us, we often feel like they deserve to be punished for what they have done. We might want to hurt them in the same way they hurt us, yell at them, ignore them or refuse to help them. What are some ways we can, instead, offer mercy to others who have sinned against us or hurt us?

HANDS

Think of one or two people who have greatly hurt or offended you. Read the verses below and write down 1-2 ways the Bible tells us to respond when people hurt us.

- Luke 6:27-28, 35 says, "But I say to you who listen: Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you … but love your enemies, do what is good and lend, expecting nothing in return. Then, your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High. For He is gracious to the ungrateful and evil."

- Romans 12:17-21 says, "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Give careful thought to do what is honorable in everyone's eyes. If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Friends, do not avenge yourselves; instead, leave room for God's wrath, because it is written, 'Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay, says the Lord.' But if your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink. For in so doing you will be heaping fiery coals on his head. Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good."

Pray that God will help you show mercy in those ways to the people on your list.